

MAR 15 1979

Chicken Pox is a minor communicable disease, the main feature of which is the rash. Its main importance from a public health point of view is the fact that it may be confused with smallpox.

SYMPTOMS

The rash comes on about 24 hours after the first sign of sickness and new spots (blisters) continue to appear in crops for two or three days. The spots first show as little raised lumps on the surface of the skin. Within a few hours they fill with a watery fluid resembling little blisters and in another day or so appear to be filled with pus. During the third and fourth days the pustules dry into a brownish scab which eventually fall off. The rash is more abundant on the body than on limbs or face. The disease is infectious until all the scabs are off. The rash is very itchy. Calamine lotion may be used to relieve the symptoms. Warm baths will assist in separation of scabs.

TRANSMISSION

Infection is spread from case to case by airborne spread or occasionally by articles freshly soiled with discharges from the skin or from the nose and throat.

INCUBATION PERIOD

Two or three weeks, commonly 13 to 17 days.

NOTIFICATION

The local city health department or health unit should be notified as soon as a diagnosis of chicken pox is confirmed.

ISOLATION PROCEDURES

None.

QUARANTINE

None.

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SPECIAL MEASURES

Exclusion from school of the infected person from the time the eruption first appears for seven days.

Those caring for the patient should wash their hands thoroughly after touching the patient or articles he has handled. These articles should be cleaned thoroughly.

SPECIAL NOTE

If the illness is unusually severe the advise of the family physician should be sought.